

# A Comparative Study of Students' Writing Competence and Strategies between Extrovert and Introvert Students at the Second Year of SMAN 1 Terbanggi Besar

Gilang Ramadhan, Ag. Bambang Setiyadi, Gede Eka Putrawan

English Education Study Program, University of Lampung

**Abstrak.** Setiap orang memiliki tingkat kemampuan menulis yang berbeda-beda. Tipe kepribadian adalah salah satu penentu perbedaan tersebut. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji apakah jenis kepribadian *introvert* atau *extrovert* memiliki kemampuan dan strategi menulis lebih baik dan menguji hubungan kemampuan dan strategi menulis. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah tiga puluh dua siswa kelas sebelas SMA Negeri 1 Terbanggi Besar. Sebelum penelitian dimulai, subjek dikelompokkan menjadi dua kategori, *introvert* dan *extrovert*, menggunakan kuesioner *Eysenck Personality Inventory*. Data diambil menggunakan kuesioner *Writing Strategies* dan tes menulis. *Independent group T-Test* dan *Pearson's Product Moment for Correlation* digunakan untuk menganalisa hasil tes dan kuisisioner. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa siswa *introvert* lebih baik dalam hal kemampuan dan strategi menulis. Juga ditemukan ada korelasi positif antara kemampuan dan strategi menulis. Ini menunjukkan bahwa pada dasarnya, semakin baik strategi menulis yang digunakan, semakin baik pula hasilnya.

**Abstract.** Everyone has a different writing competence level. A personality type is one of the factors for those differences. The current research was aimed to find out the better group in writing competence and strategies between introvert and extrovert students and the correlation between writing strategies and competence. The subjects of the research were thirty-two students of SMA Negeri 1 Terbanggi Besar. Before the research was conducted, the subject was divided into two categories, introvert and extrovert, using Eysenck Personality Inventory. The data were collected by writing strategies questionnaires and a writing test. *Independent class T-Test* and *Pearson's Product Moment for Correlation* were used to analyze the results of the writing test and writing strategies questionnaires. The result showed that the introvert students were better in both writing strategies and competences than the extrovert students. The positive correlation was also concluded between writing strategies and competence. This suggests that the better a student applies writing strategies, the better his/her writing competence is.

**Keywords:** writing strategy, writing competence, introvert, extrovert

## INTRODUCTION

English is taught in every level of education – from kindergarten to university. English is also taught in senior high school (SMA). The English curriculum of SMA requires SMA/MA students to be able to use language in communicative level. This indicates that they are expected to be able to access knowledge and information from the target language (English) with their language skills. To achieve this, there are four skills of language that should be learnt by them, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Recent studies showed that not only cognitive factors have an effect on successful foreign language learning but affective, motivational, personality and other external factors also have significant effects on this complex process (Ehrman and Oxford, 1995:89). It has been questioned that even in similar learning environments, students from the same or similar background may experience great differences in how quickly they pick up and reach proficiency in a language (Roberts & Meyer, 2012:4). Therefore, studying individual differences in foreign language learning can contribute to a better understanding of foreign language learning, especially in Indonesia which has a lot of different cultures, ethnic groups, and social backgrounds.

Taking a look at individual differences, personality is one of the important aspects. Funder (2007:221) states that personality refers to an individual's characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior, together with the psychological mechanisms, hidden or not, behind those patterns. It means that personality is an individual's unique pattern that leads one to think, act, and respond to stimuli differently from other people. In other words, personality is one's nature that differs them from one another.

There are a lot of models and taxonomy in defining human personality. One of which is the three-factors theory. Eysenck and Eysenck (1964) states that human personality has three dimensions and each of them is a bipolar dimension, meaning that each has a direct opposite. Those dimensions are extroversion and introversion, neurotic and emotionally stable, psychotic and self-controlled.

Extraversion and introversion deal with the way people prefer to attain energy and focus their attention. In this category, there are two types of personality, they are extrovert and introvert. Extrovert people prefer to get energy from outside sources or outer world, but introverts prefer solitary activities and the inner world of ideas as the source of their energy (Eysenck & Chan, 1982). Furthermore, Jung (1971 as cited in

Purwati 1997:4) classifies that extrovert persons have the ability to socialize better than the introvert ones due to the ability to build a better communication.

Despite the fact that personality – in this case, extroversion/introversion – is the most individual characteristic of a human being and is really important in the learning process of English for foreign language, it does not receive as much attention in foreign studies in the education field as other factors such as teaching method and teaching media, there is even less research that focuses on extroversion and introversion.

Writing itself is an important language skill to master. Most academic institutions – including formal schools – make writing an important part in the curriculum that when students graduate, they will have been trained to write decently. This is due to the fact that in professional level, writing is the most fundamental requirement.

Furthermore, Walters (1990:90) states that writing is a complex process since it is made of a large number of skills, not only one element that is used but also all of language elements need to be considered such as spelling, grammar, diction, punctuation, etc. Certainly, without all of these elements, it is difficult to write in a good composition of this language skill. Due to its difficulty, it is obvious that everyone has their own process in writing.

Writing process includes listing ideas, making an outline, writing a draft, correcting and improving the draft, and writing the final version. Furthermore, Richards and Renandya (2002:316) state that there are four stages of writing process. Those stages are planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Each stage of the writing process needs to be done correctly in order to make a decent writing and one way to do the process correctly is by having thorough writing strategies.

Considering the difficulty of generating a good writing, it is not surprising that students' ability in writing specifically in senior high school is unsatisfactory. Based on the writer's pre-observation, there are still a lot of students who cannot write an acceptable writing. But still, difficulty should not be an excuse to students' low ability. Because in the end, they all should be able to make a good writing to compete in the globalization era.

There are some factors that influence the situation such as teacher, teaching media, teaching method, and students' differences. Teaching media and methods have been widely researched thus generating more and more new findings. However, those studies are still missing one more key to successful language learning, individual

differences. The writer hopes that in the future, other researchers would make a method or media that also considers students differences or at least English teachers would apply the teaching method and media by considering that.

As an attempt to complete the missing pieces, this study proposed three research questions to be answered, they are:

1. Which group of students at the second-grade of SMA Negeri 1 Terbanggi Besar has a better writing skill?
2. How different are the writing strategies applied by extrovert and introvert students at the second-grade of SMA Negeri 1 Terbanggi Besar?
3. Is there any relationship between students' writing strategies and their writing competence at the second grade of SMA Negeri 1 Terbanggi Besar?

## **METHODS**

Causal comparative of ex-post facto design was used in this research. Two groups of students – introvert and extrovert – were compared to find out which group of students was better in writing. The subjects of this study were 32 second-grade students of SMAN 1 Terbanggi Besar. The sample was selected using purposive sampling. Two questionnaires (Eysenck Personality Inventory and writing strategy questionnaire) and a writing test were used as instruments of this research. The EPI questionnaire consists of 36 yes or no questions, while the writing strategies questionnaire consists of 30 likert scaled items each of which has five options. To achieve the reliability of the writing test, inter-rater reliability was applied. As stated by Setiyadi (2006:35) “reliability aspects concern with the consistency of measurement of a research, or the ability of a measurement to measure the same research subjects in a different time and gives consistent results.” The validity of the test was ensured by fulfilling three aspects, construct, and content validity. The face validity was fulfilled by consulting the test composition to the advisors. The construct validity was achieved by following Heaton (1991:135) theory on five writing aspects, they are content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanic. The students were divided into two categories, introvert and extrovert according to the result of EPI questionnaire. After that they did the writing test and filled out the writing strategies questionnaire. Finally, the data were analyzed using *Independent class T-Test* and *Pearson's Product Moment for Correlation* on SPSS version 17.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## Results

The result of the writing test is provided in this table below:

**Table 1. Result of the writing test**

	Group of Students	Number of Students	Mean Score	Mean Difference between Introvert and Extrovert Students
Writing test	Introvert	14	73.8	5.4
	Extrovert	18	68.4	

Table 1 shows the result of the writing pre-test of the introvert and extrovert students. The introvert group's average score is 73.8, while the extrovert group's mean score is 68.4. Based on the result of the test, it is concluded that introvert students perform better than extrovert students.

Furthermore, to investigate the writing strategies used by the two groups of students during the test, the result of the writing strategies questionnaire is explicated as follows:

**Table 2. Result of writing strategies per-stage**

Stage	Personality		Mean Difference
	Extrovert	Introvert	
Planning	30.4	37.4	7
Drafting	33.3	39.3	6
Revising and editing	35	43.5	8.5

Based on Table 2 above, in planning stage, the extroverts score 30.4 while the introverts score 37.4 and the mean difference is 7. In drafting stage, extroverts mean score is 33.3 while introverts mean score is 39.3 with the mean difference of 6. In the revising and editing stages, extroverts' mean score is 35, while introverts' mean score is 43.5, with mean difference of 8.5. The results showed that introvert students scored slightly better in writing strategies usage. Therefore, it is concluded that introvert students use more writing strategies than extrovert ones.

Finally, to see the correlation between writing competence and strategies, the results of both were analyzed using *Pearson product moment correlation* and the result is as follows:

**Table 3. Correlation between writing strategies and competence**

		Writing_strategies	Writing_competence
writing_strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.420*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.017
	N	32	32
Writing_competence	Pearson Correlation	.420*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.017	
	N	32	32

From Table 3 it can be seen that the significance level is 0.017 and it is lower than 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that  $p$  is lower than 0.05 ( $0.017 < 0.05$ ). Overall, it can be assumed that the research hypothesis is accepted and there is a positive correlation between writing strategies and writing competence. In other words, it can be said that the more students use writing strategies, the better their writing competence is.

## Discussions

To answer research question number one, the researcher had the students do a test – a descriptive writing test. The test was to write down their favorite character, either it was real or fictional. All the students were kept in the same class for practicality. Not to mention they had no idea they had been grouped into two categories to maintain the naturalness of the research.

The result reveals the introvert students got better score than the extrovert ones. The introvert group's mean score is 70.5, and the extrovert group is 68.5. At first glance, it is visible that introvert students out-performed the extrovert students in doing the writing task. This result confirms Jahanbazi's (2007) investigation in Iran in which he found out that introverts were more successful than their extrovert counterparts in the overall writing quality.

In addition, to address research question number two, the writer administered the writing strategies questionnaire to see the writing strategies used by both extrovert and introvert students. Writing strategies refer to the systematic plans that are done by

the writer in every stage of writing process. According to Wong (2005:47), it is believed that writing strategies play a key role in the development of second language (L2) writing. Based on Wong's claim, it is an essential factor in the writing process.

The result of the questionnaire shows that the mean score of introvert group is 120.2; 37.4 in planning section; 39.3 in the drafting section; and 43.5 in the revising and editing sections. Meanwhile the extrovert group, the mean score is 98.7; 30.4 in planning stage; 33.3 in drafting stage, and 35 in revising and editing sections. From the results, it is clear that all the participants (introvert and extrovert) are reported using all categories of writing strategies. Furthermore, it is also revealed that introvert students applied more writing strategies than extrovert ones.

With regards to the result of writing strategies questionnaire, it is shown that introvert students had a higher tendency toward the use of writing strategies than extrovert students did. The result of this study confirms the result of a study conducted by Liyanage and Bartlett (2013:598) that states that personality traits such as extroversion appear to be an important factor in determining the use of the writing strategies. Thus, it points out the fact that the propensity of students in applying writing strategies is influenced by their personality; to be more specific, that is extraversion.

Finally, to investigate research question number three, the result of writing strategies questionnaire and the writing test were analyzed using *Pearson's Product Moment for Correlation* in SPSS. The result shows that there is a positive correlation between students writing strategies and writing competence. According to the result of the analysis, the author assumes that variations in the use of writing strategies affect writing competence. Planning, drafting, editing and revising strategies positively correlate with students' writing competence which indicates that the more students use the strategies, the higher scores they will get in the writing test.

Factually, introvert students use writing strategies more often than the extroverts do. According to Setiyadi, Sukirlan, and Mahpul (2016:15) different language skills are significantly correlated with the use of different learning strategies. It may be concluded that some language learning strategies will be more effective for improving certain skills while some others will be better for other skills. It means that the more we apply any form of language skills – writing strategies for example, the better the learners get.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

### **Conclusion**

Based the elaboration of the findings above, it can be concluded that writing strategies are correlated with writing competence criteria. In addition, it is found that introvert students have better writing ability compared with extrovert students. It is found that Introvert students use more writing strategies than extrovert students. In line with this, introverts' writing score in the test is better than extrovert students. In the final analysis, the writer concludes that writing strategies play a key role in writing. Therefore, since introverts used more writing strategies, their writing results were better.

### **Suggestions**

Extroversion and introversion have been proven to be important variables in English as foreign language (EFL) learning in Indonesia. From extroversion and introversion extremes, the students have different behavior and attitude in the classroom. Hence, these differences lead to different learning outcome. Some personality traits also benefit the person to learn better in certain language skill. Therefore, Language teachers need to condition the process of teaching and learning in order for their students to use language learning strategies accordingly when teaching English as a foreign language. However, expansion in other schools and institutions is needed to generalize the findings of this study to the full spectrum of Indonesian senior high school students. Besides, instruments other than questionnaire will give more accurate and personal data from the subjects. These limitations need to be addressed in future research.

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